

Best wishes for the continued success of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities of South Carolina.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(Mrs. DAHLKEMPER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. DAHLKEMPER. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Black History Month, I rise to celebrate the lives of two African Americans from Erie, Pennsylvania.

Born in 1886, Harry T. Burleigh was a world-famous musician. Burleigh was the first African American composer acclaimed for his concert music, and he wrote more than 200 American art songs.

After his death in 1949, Harry Burleigh was largely forgotten until Rev. Charles Kennedy of Erie revived his memory. Rev. Kennedy, a minister and a musician, was a distinguished community leader and president of the Harry T. Burleigh Society. He championed the legacy of Burleigh's incredible talent. Sadly, Rev. Kennedy passed away this November.

Harry Burleigh and Charles Kennedy made unforgettable contributions to the African American community and all of American society. For Black History Month and every month, we honor their memories.

LET'S GET PEOPLE BACK TO WORK

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the number of new unemployment benefit claims jumped last week to 496,000 Americans. More people out of work, more people looking for those promised jobs.

Meanwhile, a year later, we're bogged down debating the administration's \$1 trillion government-run health care bill, a government-created problem that most Americans flatly reject.

Our priorities should be getting people back to work. Get government off the back of small businesses, the real creator of jobs.

But the talk around town is to raise taxes. John Marshall said, "An unlimited power to tax involves the power to destroy. There is a limit beyond which no institution and no person can bear taxation."

Tax hikes for more Federal boondoggles won't create any jobs. Leave money in the hands of the people who earned it, the American public.

Meanwhile, 15 million Americans are unemployed.

And that's just the way it is.

CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION AGENCY

(Ms. TSONGAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, Americans have long demanded reliable consumer protections for goods and services.

Much as snake oil cures, flammable children's sleepwear, and lead toys were once commonly found in the marketplace, predatory lending, hidden fees, and skyrocketing interest rates are shamefully common today, with little oversight on behalf of the consumer.

This failure has had devastating consequences for our Nation, and was one of the principal drivers of the financial crisis that resulted in a deep depression.

A strong, independent Consumer Financial Protection Agency would have the ability to rein in the worst practices of the big credit card companies, banks, and other large financial institutions, placing the consumer on a level playing field. It would also help responsible institutions like community banks and credit unions by requiring their competitors in the unregulated shadow banking world to play by the same consumer rules.

I call on the Senate to follow the House's lead in including a strong consumer rights agency in financial reform.

FUNDING FOR NASA

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss NASA funding. The President's proposed budget would end the Constellation program and shift funds to private companies, effectively killing United States human space flight. This shift to private sector is not a taxpayer savings. The Federal Government has already spent \$9 billion on NASA's Constellation program.

The new budget proposes to spend an additional \$2.5 billion to kill the Constellation, and billions more will be spent on unproven private sector entities. So, we're wasting \$11.5 billion to ensure that America's 50-year reign as the global leader in human space flight is over.

The President's budget does not even cut NASA's funding. It simply shifts funds dedicated for actual human space flight to unproven commercial entities, forcing us to reinvent the wheel on human space flight. This is not sound fiscal policy. It's not good for America's future.

I urge my colleagues to join me to support efforts to restore Constellation funding.

JOBS

(Mr. BACA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, 1 year ago last week, the President signed the Recovery Act, a comprehensive bill that

reinvested in the American workforce, an event that my colleagues on the other side have rallied against since President Obama took office. The facts simply don't back them up.

In the first quarter of 2009, our economy was losing 726,000 jobs a month. And now, largely due to the Recovery Act, the number has been reduced to 35,000 last quarter. The fact is, the CBO states that the Recovery Act created 2.4 million jobs through the end of 2009.

The Recovery Act also provided \$120 billion in tax cuts for 95 percent of working families. That's 95 percent of working families, and that's a tax cut.

Going forward, we must continue to build off this momentum of the Recovery Act. That includes passing meaningful job-creation legislation that will help small businesses and reduce unemployment. It also includes continuing focus on infrastructure projects and promoting energy efficiency initiatives.

Finally, that means we must pass meaningful health care reform.

RECOGNIZING THIRTY YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE OF VICKIE L. BANDY

(Mr. RAHALL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, the Bible tells us for everything there is a season. Surely, that includes a time to work and a time to rest.

Since 1979 I've had the privilege and indeed the honor of working with a West Virginian who has had an extraordinary time of working with me for the people of southern West Virginia. Vickie L. Bandy was born in our hometown of Beckley, West Virginia, and came to Washington, our Nation's Capital, three decades ago. She began her long career serving the State she loves and its people at my front desk. This week she retires from her Hill career serving as my deputy chief of staff.

Vickie, as we say back home, was raised right by her parents. But the truest power her parents gave her was her active faith. Far from being left at the church steps on Sunday mornings, Vickie's faith never tires. She has carried that throughout her career working on my staff and working for the people of southern West Virginia.

Our mission, of course, is larger, filling the giant void that is left in Vickie's absence. And I'm sure that we will have a hard task to do in our office, but we will do it for the people of West Virginia and for Vickie's continuing legacy of working for those people.

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PROVIDING FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2701, INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I